

THE BATTALION

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Israel refuses to pull back offensive



Israeli crime scene investigators look at the scene of an exploded bus near the city of Haifa, Israel, on Wednesday.

JENIN, West Bank (AP) — From a West Bank army base overlooking the scene of the deadliest fighting in Israel's 13-day-old offensive, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Wednesday delivered a blunt message: Israel will not pull back until Palestinian militias are crushed.

Despite his pledge to continue the offensive in the face of intense U.S. and international pressure to call it off, Sharon's defense ministry announced late Wednesday troops were pulling out of West Bank villages of Yatta, Qabaty and Samua.

Yatta and Samua are near the

southern city of Hebron, and Qabaty is near the northern city of Jenin, where some of the most fierce fighting has been reported.

Sharon's statement earlier Wednesday defied increasingly impatient U.S. demands for a withdrawal from Palestinian towns to be delivered in person Friday by Secretary of State Colin Powell and came hours after an Islamic militant blew himself up on a bus in northern Israel, killing himself and eight passengers.

Speaking to cheering soldiers at a post overlooking the battered Jenin refugee camp, Sharon said he explained to President Bush that

"we are in the middle of a battle" which, if abandoned prematurely, would only require another round of fighting later on.

"Once we finish, we are not going to stay here," the former general said. "But first we have to accomplish our mission." He added that unless Israel crushed the militants, the phenomenon of suicide bombings "could spread like a plague around the world."

Earlier in the day, Israel's Security Cabinet affirmed the decision to continue the offensive. By nightfall, resistance was subdued in the Jenin camp — where fighting has raged for days and where 13

Israeli soldiers were killed Tuesday in a sophisticated Palestinian ambush — and in the old town of Nablus, the largest West bank city.

Powell insisted his peacekeeping mission was not threatened by Sharon's refusal to halt the incursions. "My mission is not in the least in jeopardy," he told reporters in Spain.

Powell, who arrives in Jerusalem late Thursday, said he intends to meet both Sharon and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Sharon said Powell would be making a "tragic mistake" in

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Students protest war on terrorism

By Christina Hoffman
THE BATTALION

Even in Aggieland there are pockets of opposition to America's war on terrorism, and two students will travel to Washington, D.C., on April 20 to participate in a nationally-organized protest against President Bush's foreign policy.

"Our goal is to promote full democracy. We need to put power back into the hands of the people," said Chris Young, president of Students for a Civil Society and a sophomore political science major. "There are voices of dissent to this war. Not everyone is complacent."

Young and Joy De, a junior veterinarian medicine major, will participate in a march demanding an end to racial profiling, military recruitment, the imprisonment of

immigrants and to demanding a foreign policy based on social and economic justice.

The protest aims to bring an end to racial profiling and military recruitment targeting minority and working-class youth and to end the degrading and secret imprisonment of immigrants, Young said.

Young said he is opposed to the war because he does not believe violence should be used to combat violence. Also, Young said, terrorists are merely responding to America's "exploitation of the Third World and imperialist policies."

"We believe [the Bush administration] should solve the root problems with a peaceful end," Young said. "There are reasons why people

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Beutel promotes STI awareness

By Sarah Darr
THE BATTALION

April is Sexually Transmitted Infections Awareness month and the A.P. Beutel Health Center is taking the opportunity to promote testing and education for all students.

There will be an information table set up at the Rudder Fountain area, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Students will have the chance to talk with professionals and ask questions about sexually transmitted infections and diseases, said Health Education Coordinator Margaret Griffith.

A program titled "Don't Let the Bed Bugs Bite" will be held for students Monday in Rudder 510 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. The program will heighten students' awareness of the importance of getting tested, said John Prochaska, chair of Aggie Representatives Educating

About College Health (Aggie REACH) and a senior biomedical sciences major.

"Most STI's are asymptomatic, and the only way to know if you or your partner has one is to get tested," Prochaska said. He added it is a good idea for anyone who has ever had unprotected sex to get tested.

Anonymously, free HIV testing is provided by AIDS Services every Thursday from noon to 4 p.m. Urine testing for chlamydia and gonorrhea are available at Beutel for \$25. Griffith said it is important to get tested for these infections because they are curable with certain antibiotics. Also, Griffith said approximately 80 percent of women and 50 percent of men do not experience any symptoms of these particular infections.

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Tour d' A&M



Junior business major Dana Weber and other members of the Texas A&M Cycling Team pedal in front of Rudder Fountain on Wednesday. The team rode their bikes on

stationary platforms to raise money for the Lance Armstrong Foundation, a cancer awareness organization.

STUART VILLANUEVA • THE BATTALION

Marketing student dies from cancer

By Marianne Hudson
THE BATTALION

Joseph Wayne Colchin, 23, a junior marketing major from Houston, died April 1 from cancer.

Colchin was diagnosed with brain cancer in June 2000 when he went to the doctor for a headache. He had a stroke a little over a year ago, leaving his right side paralyzed. His mother, Sharon Colchin, said he continued to be upbeat and positive



COLCHIN

always had hope. He always believed he would get better until the end."

throughout his illness.

She said he had intentions to return to Texas A&M after taking this semester off because of complications.

"He was like the Energizer bunny," she said. "His quality of life never changed. He

Colchin went into a coma the evening of March 30. He was carried to the cemetery in a pick-up truck, friends said, because he had requested not to ride in the back of a hearse. At his funeral, friends wore Hawaiian shirts and dressed colorfully, instead of wearing the traditional black garb.

Steven Farnsworth, a lifelong friend of

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Corps searches for new commandant

By Marianne Hudson
THE BATTALION

The Corps of Cadets will have a new commandant by next fall, University officials said.

Dr. Wynn Rosser, assistant vice president for the Department of Student Affairs, said seven applicants sent in resumes by the April 8 deadline. But the search advisory committee will continue to accept applications until the position is filled.

Rosser said half of the applicants are former students. They represent the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps. No women have applied yet.

Gen. M.T. Hopgood, the current commandant, will retire in May after 14 years at Texas A&M. The committee will begin interviews this semester and have the new commandant installed by next fall.

Dr. J. Malon Southerland, the committee chair and vice president of student affairs, will appoint an interim commandant for the summer if the position is vacant at that time.

The search committee began advertising for the position in March. They sent letters to all former students with general or

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STI's IN BRAZOS COUNTY

- HIV/AIDS 101 cases
- Chlymydia 520 cases per 100,000
- Gonorrhea 361 cases per 100,000

Source: Texas Department of Health

CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

Landgraf elected Senate speaker

By C. E. Walters
THE BATTALION

Brooks Landgraf, a junior political science major and former Rules and Regulations Committee chair was elected speaker of the Student Senate unanimously in the first meeting of the 55th Senate on Wednesday. Landgraf, who ran unopposed,

joined the Senate in October 2000. He said his goals for the semester include fighting for the interest of the Student Senate and helping new senators in their roles.

"[I want to help] the growth and development of other people," Landgraf said.

Landgraf said it is important to foster professionalism and decorum in

the Senate and make sure all Aggies are represented.

In the contest for speaker pro tempore, Logan Renfrow, a freshman business administration major, won against Natasha Eubanks, a sophomore biomedical sciences major, with 24 votes to Eubanks' 16. There

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Aggies dream of the movie-making industry

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Aggies take two from Tech
A&M pitchers rule doubleheader, throw consecutive shutouts

WEATHER

TODAY

HIGH 80° F
LOW 59° F

FRIDAY

HIGH 83° F
LOW 61° F

FORECASTS COURTESY OF www.collegeweather.com